

The Exchange
15-19 W. Bank Street
Petersburg
Virginia

HABS No. VA-647

HABS
VA
27-PET
6-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. VA-647

THE EXCHANGE

HABS
VA
27-PET,
6-

Location: 15-19 West Bank Street, Petersburg, Virginia

Present Owner: City of Petersburg, City Hall, Petersburg,
Virginia

Present Occupant: City of Petersburg

Present Use: Police Station and Court

Brief Statement
of Significance: This outstanding Greek Revival building is
noteworthy because of its fine proportions,
portico, dome and lantern. It was built
c. 1840-1841 by a group of businessmen to
display tobacco and cotton, and to hold
auctions and sales. It once served (c. 1862)
as the Bank of the City of Petersburg.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1840-1841 (Landbook 1840 and 1841, handwritten bound manuscripts in the Clerk's Office of Hustings Court, Petersburg.)
2. Architect: According to an article in The Petersburg Mail of 1884, the Exchange was designed by a Mr. Berrien of New York. Berrien may have been an assistant to Calvin Pollard, to whom St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Sycamore St., Petersburg, is attributed. Both buildings were erected at approximately the same time.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Complete chain of title for the building follows. Deed Books are in the Clerk's Office of Hustings Court at Petersburg.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>
4/2/1839	Whitmore, Hubert	Petersburg Exchange
Book 11	Martha	
page 22		

7/12/1839 Book 11 page 144	Gowans, John	Petersburg Exchange
6/16/1858 Book 24 page 436	Petersburg Exchange	Ragland, Reuben
5/23/1862 Book 26 page 640	Ragland, Reuben Laiuia	Davis, M. M. Abraham, P.
10/27/1862 Book 27 page 132	Abraham, Philip (one-half share of property)	Drake, J. C.
4/1/1884 Book 45 page 125	Davis, M. M. Miriam Drake, J. C. Eloise	Heinemann, H.
2/15/1916 Book 87 page 101	Heinemann, Henry	Talley, William H. Stratton, H. P. Romaine, C. N.
9/3/1917 Book 91 page 182	Talley, William H. Maggie S. Stratton, H. P. Ella L. Romaine, Charles N. Elizabeth P.	Exchange Realty Corporation
2/26/1923 Book 103 page 315	Exchange Realty Corporation	Stratton, H. P.
2/16/1927 Book 112 page 549	Stratton, H. P. Ella L.	City of Petersburg

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Unknown
5. Alterations and additions: Unknown
6. Important old views: Published water-color sketch of William S. Simpson in the Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (James G. Scott and Edward A. Wyatt, IV, Petersburg's Story (Petersburg: Titmus Optical Company, 1960), opposite p. 67.)

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

The incorporators of the Petersburg Exchange in 1839 were the first David Dunlop, founder of a family prominent in the manufacture of tobacco in Petersburg for three generations, the tobacco firms of Leslie & Brydon and L. E. Stainback Son & Co., D'Arcy Paul, founder of the Petersburg Savings and Insurance Co., T. N. Lee, and Dunn, McIlwaine & Brownley, commission merchants. (Bailey, James H., "History of Buildings, Greek Revival Period," Progress-Index, Petersburg, April 16, 1967, p. 9, column 6.)

Prepared by Randall J. Biallas
University of Illinois, Urbana
August 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture in Petersburg. The building is noteworthy on the exterior for its massive Doric columns and classic pediment over the colonnade, and for the ten-sided lantern of the dome of the main structure. On the interior the large dome and supporting columns and cornice are of note.
2. Condition of fabric: Both the exterior and the interior need much work to be brought back to the original state. Much remodeling has been done on the interior on both the ground floor and the main floor.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions and shape: The building is 80' x 60', excluding the projecting portico, which is 35' x 25'. The building is rectangular in shape and is two stories plus a basement.
2. Foundations, etc.: Brick. The exterior basement walls are brick and the two interior supporting foundation walls are comprised of large brick arches, each wall having six (6) arches, 13' o. c.

3. Wall construction, etc. Brick. The front wall, however, has been stuccoed and scored in an ashlar finish.
4. Chimneys: There is one chimney at the right rear of the building (facing the building). The fireplace has been plastered over inside and the chimney rises only three (3) feet above the roof line.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are two double doors at the ground floor front elevation, one on each side of the projecting portico. Also several doors on the sides and at the rear, but none appear to be original. However, the front entry doorway at the main floor level is a very handsome 12' high sliding double doorway. There is moulded wood trim around the door panels and above the door lintel is a large fan shape decoration of carved wood. One door opening of interest which has been closed in is that at the ground floor center rear wall. This is now bricked in, but was probably a service entrance when the building served as a commodities exchange.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Most windows appear to be original. On the ground floor they are double windows separated by a common jamb, double hung, four lights per sash with a brick sill and stone lintel. On the main floor, they are two types - primarily double hung, six lights per sash. However, in the center of each side wall there is a large double window, common jamb, which extends two floors, main and balcony, and arched at the top.
6. Porches and Areaways: The large covered portico which extends out from the front of the building is a very striking feature. The main floor is elevated 10' above the street and fifteen (15) steps, framed by large stone pillars, lead up to the porch. At the porch floor level are four (4) large Doric columns, constructed of brick with a heavy stucco surface. These columns support the large gabled porch roof and architrave around the roof. At the front is a pediment of classic order and handsomely detailed. At the rear of the building is a small areaway leading down to a basement entry.

7. Structural system: The foundation bearing walls and brick arches as previously described support the entire structure above. The arched interior wall serves primarily to support the large interior dome, which itself is constructed of wood trusses which spring from the attic level. This weight, in turn, is carried to interior columns, which ring the dome space. The hipped roof of the main structure is also a series of wood trusses. The floors are primarily wood joists.
8. Roof shape and covering: A hipped roof intersects the dome, which projects above the ridge of the roof. The covering is tin with ribs 18" to 24" o. c., varying.
9. Cornice, eaves: A projecting (2') cornice extends around the front and the two sides.
10. Cupola: The cupola rests on top of the dome. It is ten-sided with a window and six lights on each side. It has a cornice and a shallow pointed roof.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The basement is a large open area, primarily a storage space.
- b. Ground floor: Extensive remodeling has resulted in almost destroying any semblance of the original space. Apparently the ground floor originally had a large central hallway leading to an exterior entrance at the rear, and with rooms off to each side.
- c. Main floor: The primary space is that formed by the dome, approximately 40' in diameter. There is an entry space at the front just prior to entering the domed area and around the dome on each side, filling out the rectangular exterior shape, are small rooms for offices, etc.
- d. Second floor: It is also known as the balcony. It has a hallway leading around the dome and open to the floor below on one side. The exterior side leads to rooms of various sizes and dimensions surrounding the dome space.

2. Stairways: There are four (4) stairways in the building, one to the basement from the ground floor, two (one on each side) from the ground floor to the main floor, one (circular) from the main to the second floor. The circular stairway is interesting, especially in that it is a very narrow tight staircase and that it opens at the second floor onto a very large open area.
 3. Flooring: The basement floor is brick. All other floors are wood, with the exception of the present jail area ground floor, which is concrete.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The basement walls are brick, with an exposed structure ceiling. The ground floor is interesting in that the large hallway has a decorative paneled metal ceiling. All other walls and ceiling finishes are painted plaster.
 5. Doorways and doors: The doors and trim on almost all the interior doors are typical: moulded wood trim. The double doorway at the foyer entry to the main domed space has a handsomely detailed frame and fan light above.
 6. Decorative features and trim: Of particular note, other than those features previously mentioned, are the interior column capitals with ogee and egg and dart moulding; and in addition the large wood cornice which projects out from the base of the dome and acting as a visual pedestal for the dome. This cornice, 5' in height is greatly detailed with lentils and other moulding.
 7. Lighting: Modern
 8. Heating: Steam
- D. Site and Surroundings:
1. Orientation and general setting: The building faces almost due south on West Bank Street. There are multi-story commercial buildings at close proximity on all sides, except at the rear, which has one story garage to serve the Exchange, now used as Police Headquarters
 2. Landscaping and walks: The building is set back about

10' from the street (beginning of the porch steps). The sidewalk butts up to the building in the front and there are paved alleys on both sides. There is also a paved parking area in the rear. No landscaping.

prepared by John M. McRae
Project Supervisor
HABS
August 1968

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records are part of the documentation made during the 1968 Petersburg Summer Project, undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with The Historic Petersburg Foundation, Inc., with financial assistance from The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. During the summer, records were made of twenty-two buildings in the city.

The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor was John M. McRae of the University of Florida. The recording team was composed of Randall J. Biallas, historian (University of Illinois, Urbana), and student assistant architects Michael Hamilton (University of Arizona), Thomas J. Sanford (Washington State University), and Edwin S. Smith, Jr. (Rhode Island School of Design). Photographs were made by George Eisenman.